

**CLAIMS:**

What is claimed is:

1. A coin input device for accepting coins to play a wagering game on a gaming machine, comprising:
  - 5 a coin path in which the accepted coins travel;
  - a validation unit along the coin path; and
  - a coin control feature along the coin path and upstream from the validation unit, the coin control feature being configured to slow a velocity of the coins and properly space the coins, thereby preventing jamming and  
10 allowing the validation unit to accurately identify and authenticate each coin.
2. The coin input device of claim 1, wherein the coin path is generally vertical such that the coins travel in the coin path by a force of gravity.  
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3. The coin input device of claim 1, wherein the coin control feature impacts the edges of the respective coins to slow the velocity of the coins.
4. The coin input device of claim 1, wherein the coin control feature impacts the  
20 faces of the respective coins to slow the velocity of the coins.
5. The coin input device of claim 1, wherein the coin control feature includes a pivoting member struck by each coin as the coins travel in the coin path.
- 25 6. The coin input device of claim 5, wherein the pivoting member includes a top portion and a bottom portion, the top portion being struck first by a coin to force the pivoting member to rotate in a first direction and then the bottom portion being struck next by the coin to force the pivoting member to rotate in a second direction opposite to the first direction.  
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7. The coin input device of claim 6, wherein the top portion is forced by the coin against a side wall of the coin input device to stop the pivoting member from rotating in the first direction.

8. The coin input device of claim 5, wherein the pivoting member is struck once by a coin to initially force the pivoting member to rotate in one direction and then struck again by the coin to force the pivoting member to rotate in an opposite direction.
9. The coin input device of claim 5, wherein the pivoting member impacts the edges of the respective coins to slow the velocity of the coins.
10. The coin input device of claim 5, wherein the pivoting member impacts the faces of the respective coins to slow the velocity of the coins.
11. The coin input device of claim 1, wherein the coin control feature includes a flexible cone shaped member connected to a conical compression spring.
12. The coin input device of claim 1, wherein the coin control feature includes a flexible spring member connected to, or bent over, a pin.
13. The coin input device of claim 1, wherein the coin control feature includes a number of posts, pins, or serrations along the coin path to deflect and slow the coins traveling in the coin path.
14. The coin input device of claim 1, wherein the coin control feature includes an abrupt change in a direction of the coin path.
15. A method of handling coins for playing a wagering game on a gaming machine, comprising:
- accepting coins at a coin input device having a coin path;
  - transporting the accepted coins along the coin path;
  - controlling the coins with a coin control feature that slows a velocity of the coins and properly spaces the coins, the coin control feature being along the coin path; and
  - after controlling the coins, validating the coins.

16. The method of claim 15, wherein the coin path is generally vertical such that the coins travel in the coin path by a force of gravity.
17. The method of claim 15, wherein the controlling step includes impacting the edges of the respective coins to slow the velocity of the coins.
18. The method of claim 15, wherein the controlling step includes impacting the faces of the respective coins to slow the velocity of the coins.
19. The method of claim 15, wherein the controlling step includes impacting each coin with a pivoting member of the coin control feature as the coins travel in the coin path.
20. The method of claim 19, wherein the pivoting member includes a top portion and a bottom portion, the top portion being struck first by a coin to force the pivoting member to rotate in a first direction and then the bottom portion being struck next by the coin to force the pivoting member to rotate in a second direction opposite to the first direction.
21. The method of claim 20, wherein the top portion is forced by the coin against a side wall of the coin input device to stop the pivoting member from rotating in the first direction.
22. The method of claim 19, wherein the pivoting member is struck once by a coin to initially force the pivoting member to rotate in one direction and then struck again by the coin to force the pivoting member to rotate in an opposite direction.
23. The method of claim 19, wherein the pivoting member impacts the edges of the respective coins to slow the velocity of the coins.
24. The method of claim 19, wherein the pivoting member impacts the faces of the respective coins to slow the velocity of the coins.

25. The method of claim 15, wherein the coin control feature includes a flexible cone shaped member connected to a conical compression spring.

26. The method of claim 15, wherein the coin control feature includes a flexible  
5 spring member connected to, or bent over, a pin.

27. The method of claim 15, wherein the coin control feature includes a number of posts, pins, or serrations along the coin path to deflect and slow the coins traveling in the coin path.

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28. The method of claim 15, wherein the coin control feature includes an abrupt change in a direction of the coin path.

29. A gaming machine comprising:  
15 a processor for conducting a wagering game; and  
a coin input device for accepting coins to play the wagering game, the coin input device including  
a coin path in which the accepted coins travel;  
a validation unit along the coin path; and  
20 a coin control feature along the coin path and upstream from the validation unit, the coin control feature being configured to slow a velocity of the coins and properly space the coins, thereby preventing jamming and allowing the validation unit to accurately identify and authenticate each coin.

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30. The gaming machine of claim 29, wherein the coin path is generally vertical such that the coins travel in the coin path by a force of gravity.

31. The gaming machine of claim 29, wherein the coin control feature impacts the  
30 edges of the respective coins to slow the velocity of the coins.

32. The gaming machine of claim 29, wherein the coin control feature impacts the faces of the respective coins to slow the velocity of the coins.

33. The gaming machine of claim 29, wherein the coin control feature includes a pivoting member struck by each coin as the coins travel in the coin path.

34. The gaming machine of claim 33, wherein the pivoting member includes a top portion and a bottom portion, the top portion being struck first by a coin to force the pivoting member to rotate in a first direction and then the bottom portion being struck next by the coin to force the pivoting member to rotate in a second direction opposite to the first direction.

35. The gaming machine of claim 34, wherein the top portion is forced by the coin against a side wall of the coin input device to stop the pivoting member from rotating in the first direction.

36. The gaming machine of claim 33, wherein the pivoting member is struck once by a coin to initially force the pivoting member to rotate in one direction and then struck again by the coin to force the pivoting member to rotate in an opposite direction.

37. The gaming machine of claim 29, wherein the coin control feature includes a number of posts, pins, or serrations along the coin path to deflect and slow the coins traveling in the coin path.

38. A coin input device for accepting coins to play a wagering game on a gaming machine, comprising:

a coin path in which the accepted coins travel;  
means, along the coin path, for validating the coins; and  
means, along the coin path and upstream from the validating means, for slowing a velocity of the coins and properly spacing the coins, thereby preventing jamming and allowing the validating means to accurately identify and authenticate each coin.